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ABSTRACT

Instructional materials are provided for a workplace communication class that is designed to cover 3 aspects of communication in 9 class hours. The first module on personalities is devoted to the following material found in Smalley and Trent's book, "The Two Sides of Love": introduction to personality categorizing; personality survey; discussions of the lion, beaver, otter, and golden retriever personalities; and information on how the different personality types represent styles of relating. The second module on listening presents a communication model, a listening survey, and seven things that one can do to listen more effectively. The third module on conflict resolution has the following contents: discusses sources of interpersonal conflict in the workplace; conflict survey; information on preventing interpersonal conflict; benefits of conflict; a conflict-handling survey that identifies conflict resolution style; and a five-step process to solve interpersonal conflict. (YLB)

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COMMUNICATION AND PROBLEM SOLVING

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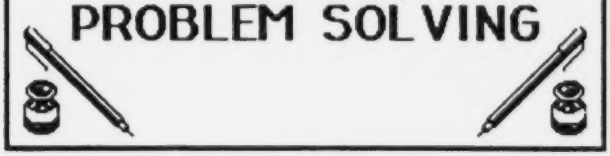
COMMUNICATION AND PROBLEM SOLVING



Section 1: The Animal In You

Section 2: Listening

Section 3: Conflict Resolution

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SECTION 1

The Animal in You

Communication

Good communication is an essential part of living. It is more than just a style of speaking; it's a style of life. Communication affects every part of our outer lives - work, home, and society. It dominates our inner world - our perceptions, image, and emotional health. Of course good communicators have problems, but they are not like the problems of poor communicators. In fact, poor communicators often seem to have few, if any, interpersonal conflicts. Upon further investigation, however, it's found that such people may have no true intimate interpersonal relationships either. Dead marriages, dead family ties, and dead friendship/work relationships are often symptomatic of poor communication. Our communication class is designed to cover 3 aspects of communication in 9 class hours. Below is a brief description of the modules.

The Animal In You

What is the first step in learning how to communicate more effectively? It is my belief that the admonition "know thyself" is foundational for effective communication . Many of the conflicts and communication barriers we experience with people are caused by personality differences. All for us have experienced relationships where "we just don't click." Or maybe we click, but we still misfire. We flare up over the way she keeps her desk or droop under his cocky stare.

What's going on here?

Well, I'm not sure, but I have found that a great possibility has something to do with the basic differences in our personalities.

There are many books on personality typing. Dozens of personality tests like the MMPI or Myers Briggs are on the market. I have taken several of them and have been told things like I'm "melancholic," I'm an INFJ and so forth. My overall impression about these kinds of tests is that they're intimidating to say the least. *Who* says I'm melancholic? And what in the world is an INFJ?

The first module in our communication class is devoted to material found in Gary Smalley's and John Trent's *The Two Sides of Love*. I took the concepts of this book and compiled them into a booklet called "The Animal in You." *Two Sides* discusses personality types and ways people can better balance their personality. It characterizes personality "bents" (our predispositions in relating to life and people) as four animal names: lions, beavers, otters, and golden retrievers. *Two Sides* stresses the need for balance in relational styles between the "hard side" (lions and beavers) and the "soft side" (otters and retrievers). The book provides a very simple personality survey. Unlike other surveys, all you need for this one is honesty and the ability to circle words and multiply by two. One thing I like about the material is that it presents weaknesses in personalities as out-of-balance strengths. In my presentation, I emphasize how these personality types represent styles of relating. For example, Lions tend to relate to life and others through force. Golden Retrievers, through neediness.

After presenting this material to several hundred folks, I have yet to hear anything negative. People really like it. And for good reason. Most students have never taken any type of personality survey. It is a revelation that all people have a basic way of relating to life and others. This module opens the door to lively discussion. Learning why certain people "make us feel funny" helps students. As one student said about a coworker, "Now I see that she's not trying to make me mad. She's a Retriever and I'm a Lion. We're just different. Now I know she's not the problem. She just thinks differently." Another student told us that she knew other people affected her behavior, but it never occurred to her that she affected theirs!

We seldom have the opportunity to look at ourselves. Even less often do we have the opportunity to discuss ourselves with others. *Two Sides* is an excellent introduction to the topic of communication.

Outline

*Introduction to Personality Categorizing
*Personality Survey
*Lion Discussion
*Beaver Discussion
*Otter Discussion
*Golden Retriever Discussion
*How Animals Relate to One Another\Style of Relating
    Lion: Force
    Beaver: Predictability
    Otter: Pleasure
    Golden Retriever: Need

Sources

The Two Sides of Love, Gary Smalley & John Trent: Focus on the Family Press

Animal Zoo Review

Directions: Use L, B, O, or G to identify the following animal types:

_____ 1. It seems like Julie knows everyone in the plant!
_____ 2. This coworker loves to tell you what and how to do things.
_____ 3. Madeline loves J.P. Stevens - she'll stay here no matter what.
_____ 4. Sometimes I wonder if Paul ever thinks about the consequences of his actions.
_____ 5. Mary can make quick and "final" decisions.
_____ 6. Steve can analyze a problem and decide how to solve it.
_____ 7. Connie is very good at listening to you.
_____ 8. This supervisor gets really upset when you ask a question.
_____ 9. Sometimes you wonder if Barry ever takes his job seriously.
____ 10. Joyce can't stand to do something half-way.
____ 11. That guy doesn't know the meaning of the word "relax."
____ 12. Rhett hates small talk.
____ 13. Sometimes Mark looks mad all day when he's trying to get something done.
____ 14. Bertha takes so long to make decisions - but they're usually right.
____ 15. Kyle doesn't have many friends, but those he has, he knows well.
____ 16. Joey tends to do whatever his friends do - even if it isn't smart.
____ 17. When Anne was criticized by her supervisor, she didn't say anything. She just got real quiet.
____ 18. Susan sent me a card on the anniversary of my father's death.
____ 19. John doesn't pay attention to detailed instruction very well.
____ 20. Marge tends to get upset when the way we do something changes suddenly.

COMMUNICATIONS: What have I learned?

Please use the scale below by circling one of the numbers (1-5) to rate your behavior after attending this class.

	USUALLY	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NOT USUALLY	HARDLY EVER
1. I give other people a chance to talk.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I recognize better the general personality traits of people.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I am learning how to focus on the issues of a conflict instead of attacking the people I am in conflict with.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am learning how to express my feelings without blaming anyone else.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I frequently challenge co-workers ideas or opinions and feel they don't know as much about the situation as I do.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I tend to listen more than talk.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I try to see things from the other persons' point of view.	1	2	3	4	5

Please check whether you think the following statements are TRUE or FALSE regarding what you have learned in this class.

	TRUE	FALSE
8. What I do affects how others behave toward me.	___	___
9. Understanding one's personality traits will help me be a better team member on the job.	___	___
10. Listening is an active process which can be learned and improved.	___	___
11. There is a strategy I can use to help resolve conflict.	___	___
12. Listening and hearing are the same thing.	___	___
13. Awareness of a person's personality can help me communicate more effectively.	___	___
14. The most important things to remember in resolving conflicts are to discover the root problem and to prepare to compromise.	___	___

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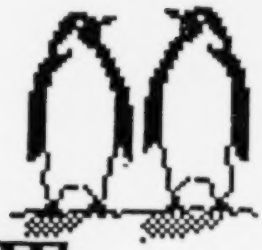

THE ANIMAL IN YOU:

A Discussion of Personality Types

from The Two Sides of Love

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PERSONALITY SURVEY

1) Look through the words/phrases found in the four boxes (**L**, **B**, **O**, and **G** boxes)
2) Go through each box and circle as many words and phrases as describe who you are consistently
3) Double the number of words/phrases you circled to come up with a total score for each (for example: if you circled **6** words/phrases in the **L** box, your score for the **L** box is **1 2**)
4) Take the scores and put them on the graph below the survey
5) Connect the dots

Two Important Things:

1) Score yourself on how you relate to the most important people in your life (since some folks act very differently at work, you may want to do the survey again, thinking of how you behave towards your coworkers)
2) Score yourself on how you consistently are and act towards others right now - not on how you want to act - **BE HONEST!**

L

Takes charge	Bold
Determined	Purposeful
Assertive	Decision maker
Firm	Leader
Enterprising	Goal Driven
Competitive	Self-reliant
Enjoys challenges	Adventurous

"Let's do it now!"

Double the number circled_____

B

Deliberate	Discerning
Controlled	Detailed
Reserved	Analytical
Predictable	Inquisitive
Practical	Precise
Orderly	Persistent
Factual	Scheduled

"How was it done in the past?"

Double the number circled_____

O

Takes nsks	Fun-loving
Visionary	Likes variety
Motivator	Enjoys change
Energetic	Creative
Very verbal	Group oriented
Promoter	Mixes easily
Avoids details	Optimistic

"Trust me! It'll work out!"

Double the number circled_____

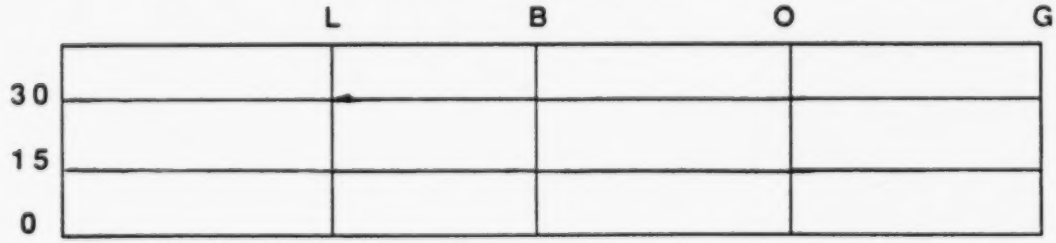
G

Loyal	Adaptable
Non demanding	Sympathetic
Even keel	Thoughtful
Avoids conflict	Nurturing
Enjoys routine	Patient
Dislikes change	Tolerant
Deep relationships	Good listener

"Let's keep things the way they are."

Double the number circled_____

Personal Strengths Survey Chart



The Two Sides of Love, Gary Smalley & John Trent, Focus on the Family Press

Discovering the Strengths of a Lion

Lions are the first of our four animal friends we will discuss. Lions are "King of the Jungle" in both business and personal relationships. They have admirable strengths such as being decisive, purposeful and great at conquering challenges. However, because they can be so hard on problems, they can also be hard on people.

Seven General Traits of a Lion

1. *Lions Are Born Leaders*

Lions are self-motivated; they don't need alot to keep them going - just point them in the right direction!

Often, lions resist being controlled by anyone. A strong-willed child is a little lion. They allow <u>you</u> to live in your house!

Lions are visionaries; they have a mental picture of how things should be and take whatever charge is needed to make their vision a reality

2. *Lions Like to Accomplish Things With Immediate Results*

Lions feel very strongly that "life is a series of problems they need to solve or challenges they need to meet." Because of this philosophy, they act in certain ways:

Lions don't like to relax around home - they need to be doing something; if you enjoy relaxing, a lion can really get on your nerves and maybe even make you feel guilty for not being productive!

Lions <u>love</u> projects: if no project is around, they can start making people (like friends and spouses) their project; they'll try to "improve" or "motivate" you

Lions need to accomplish something - lying around on Myrtle Beach doesn't accomplish anything: "Let's go jogging or find 100 sharks' teeth or something!"

+ Lions can achieve great things - do the impossible
- Projects can be pushed ahead of people
- Lions are prone to workaholism

3. *A Lion's Time Frame is Now!!*

If you work for a lion boss, his time frame is NOW. She might give you a project and say, "I want you to do this NOW." 20 minutes later, she comes to you with another project. "But you just gave me a project," you say. "Yes. But that was 20 minutes ago. I want you to do this <u>now</u>."

Spouse Lion Talk: "Dinner needs to be ready NOW."
Parent Lion Talk: "Stop crying and grow up NOW."
Baby Lion Talk: "Change my diaper and feed me NOW."

<u>How Do Other Animal Friends React to Lion Now Intensity?</u>

Lions can be so intensely into a project or just thinking about an upcoming project that they can look angry even if they're not.

Golden Retrievers and Otters shy away from lion intensity; Lions sometimes use their intense nature to shield them from "stupid" questions or interruptions or to gain emotional space that can create isolation from others

*Lions need to be very careful to check and see how much input they let others give in decisions making

From the Two Sides of Love, by Gary Smalley & John Trent, Ph.D

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4. *Lions are Decisive*

Tied in with their need to lead, control and accomplish things now is the abili to make decisions quickly: Lions can and will make decisions with or without the fa and often without asking anyone for advice.

Lions tend to say things like: "This is a no-vote decision. It's final."

+ We need Lions who can make quick decisions sometimes (like emergenci
- The "It's Final" attitude can destroy relationships

5. *Lions Want* Readers Digest-*Length Communications*

Lions gag at small talk: they like short sentences, sticking to the point, and getting past the talk to "Let's do something!"

Lion Talk: "Let's get to the point of this conversation. Talk about something important - not just "How's your day been?"

+ Lions are great at getting to solutions
- But it take time to develop good relationships

6. *Lions Often Feel Challenged by Questions*

Asking questions to a hyper Lion is often interpreted as a personal challenge not a reasonable request for information; many Lions marry Beavers and Retrievers who have a natural bent toward question-asking. Denying Beavers and Retrievers right to ask questions will harden them and shut the door to meaningful relationship

*Slow down, Lion, and look at all the sides of an issue

*Realize a loving home is more important than simply demanding loyalty

*Don't interpret Beavers' and Retrievers' need for clarification as a challenge your authority

7. *Lions Are Not Afraid of Pressure or Confrontation*

Lions thrive on pressure; they put a great deal of pressure on themselves an others (Beavers and Retrievers **do not** thrive on pressure)

Lions don't flinch at confrontation (otters and retrievers do)

- Lions can hurt others without even realizing it
- They can terrorize others with harsh language and attitudes; intimidate folk

*Remember Lion: "You can win every verbal battle, but lose the war and the prize of your family's and friends' hearts"

Trait Review

1. Lions are Born Leaders
2. Lions like to accomplish things with immediate results
3. Lions' time frame is now!
4. Lions are decisive
5. Lions want "To the Point" communication
6. Lions often feel threatened by questions
7. Lions are not afraid of pressure or confrontation

If You're A Lion, Don't Pull Your Claws Out. Just Learn When To Retract Them

From the Two Sides of Love, by Gary Smalley & John Trent, Ph.D

Discovering the Strengths of a Beaver

When you think of a beaver, what pops into your mind? We have a saying: "Busy as a beaver." And beaver dams often require dynamite to destroy them. Beavers are the real workers in our Wild Kingdom of animal friends.

Seven General Traits of a Beaver

1. *Beavers Keep Close Watch on Their Emotions*

Beavers can love and be committed to folks as much as any animal friend, but Beavers often have trouble expressing their emotions; they tend to hold back in relationships

2. *Beavers Actually Read Instruction Books*

Beavers like to do things "by the book"; they follow manuals

Beavers like to be able to plan things and don't handle unexpected situations exceptionally well

Beavers do what they think is right - they are hard on issues and often on people, too

\+ Beavers make great quality control folks at home and work

\- The problem for Beavers is that much of life and relationships does **not** go by the book; unexpected things usually happen

3. *Beavers Like to Make Careful Decisions*

Beavers are very careful and slow decision makers; they like to be <u>certain</u> the decision is the best

+To Lions and Otters, Beavers can seem to be overly cautious, but 90% of the time, their careful manner can head off poor decisions

-Sometimes Beavers can be too careful and miss excellent opportunities

4. *Beavers Like Using Their Critical Skills to Solve Problems*

Beavers <u>love</u> detail! They like maps, drawing diagrams, checking for dust, etc.

Beavers like organization - they roll their socks and store them by color and stuff!

Beavers are very good at using their analytical skills to take things (like problems) apart

Beavers have a <u>deep</u> dislike of being wrong and desire to do everything right

\- Beavers are very good at taking people apart when they're angry and can become piercing critics

5. *Beavers Live by the Motto "Let's Do This Right"*

"If it's worth doing, it's worth doing right" is a Beaver motto

Beavers like doing things with precision and accuracy; that crooked picture on the wall won't bother a lion but it will drive a hyper Beaver crazy!

*Beaver person, make sure your need for perfection in a project doesn't override the folks behind it

From the Two Sides of Love, by Gary Smalley & John Trent, Ph.D.

6. *Beavers Tend to Turn Anger Inward*

Of all our animal friends, Beavers are the most prone to depression and associated physical problems; depression is defined as anger turned inward. When angry, Lions roar and Otters verbally attack, but Beavers tend to turn anger on themselves.

Mistakes make Beavers angry at themselves; for Beavers, making a mistake says that something is wrong with them as a person

Beavers like clear directions and the freedom to ask questions

They thrive in a non-critical atmosphere and do their best work there

-Beavers need to guard against assuming that everyone sees the same problem or in the same way as they do

*Understand that both Beavers and Golden Retrievers tend to slow down under pressure

*Parents of Beaver children need to praise and encourage Beaver children's character and not just their accomplishments; try to take the pressure of always performing perfectly off your Beaver children

*Beavers need to learn that it's o.k. to fail and to call for help when it's needed

*If you live around Beavers, try to keep in mind that Beavers are very sensitive to criticism

7. *Beavers Tend to Focus on the Past*

A Beaver's primary time frame is the past; they want a track record to look back on

Beavers like knowing how something was done before and if it worked then, they'll stay with it now

Beavers tend to look to the past to explain present situations or problems in life, work, etc.

+Beavers make exceptional workers

-If life hasn't gone well for a Beaver in the past, it is hard for them to expect the future to be better

Trait Review

1. Beavers keep a close watch on their emotions
2. Beavers actually read instruction books
3. Beavers like to make careful decisions
4. Beavers like using their critical skills to solve problems
5. Beavers live by the motto "Let's do it right!"
6. Beavers often turn anger inward
7. Beavers tend to focus on the past

Being A Beaver Is Great, But Make Sure You Don't Let The Past And Your Natural Desire to Back Away Keep You From Relating Well To Others In The Present!

From the Two Sides of Love, by Gary Smalley & John Trent, Ph.D.

Discovering the Strengths of an Otter

The overriding drive for a Lion is to conquer and accomplish something. Beavers like to do things right and in a quality way. Think about otters: otters like to float around on their backs and balance food on their tummies. Otter people are kind of like that, too!

Seven General Traits of an Otter

1. *Otters Just Want To Have Fun*

Otters are motivated by the drive to have fun and enjoy life

If you have an Otter child, they probably find creative ways to bathe, eat, sleep, etc.; if you are married to an Otter, they probably are full of spontaneity, a d surprises - they can turn a one-hour project into a three-hour adventure!

+Beavers and Retrievers enjoy the fun-loving attitude of Otters, but

- Otters need to remember that other animal friends need deep conversation and will starve from surfacy talk. Others might tell Otters something like, "Don't you *ever* get serious?"

*Have good, safe fun Otter, but don't avoid serious discussions and issues

2. *Otters Are Great At Motivating Others To Action*

Otters are great at motivating people: they can get people to do thing they might not do otherwise; "Trust me!" is a favorite Otter saying

+ Otters can capture an audience and encourage the fainthearted

+ They have a natural gift of gab that that give the workplace or home extra energy and drive

* Otters need to think through the consequences of "fun" things they do: "I don't think we can make it across the lake." "Sure we can. Let's go!"

3. Otters Tend To Avoid The Fine Print

Otters avoid details and manuals; they are great at "winging it"

Otters are innovative; chefs and artists do great things when they leave manuals alone and use their imaginations

- Some things need to be done by the book; Otters like to tape things up but some things need to be fixed correctly (like brakes and conflicts)

4. *Otters Focus On The Future*

Otters tend to live their lives looking toward the future; this makes them almost immune to worry (99% of all problems exist in the past or present) so

+Otters are optimistic even during bad times

- Otters married to the other animal personalities need to be sensitive to others' need for a track record; this difference in viewing time can cause some very serious problems in a relationship ("I promise I will change" vs. "You haven't changed yet")

From the Two Sides of Love, by Gary Smalley & John Trent, Ph.D.

5. *Otters Tend To Avoid Confrontations At All Costs*

Otters have trouble confronting others or tackling difficult discussions

- Difficult issues and problem resolution cannot be avoided if Otters are to have healthy relationships with others

- Procrastination in dealing with "no fun" problems can make problems worse and can even kill relationships

6. *Otters Are Tremendous Networkers*

Otters are great at getting people together; they know people, who know people who know people (if you need a job lead, check with an Otter!)

They have a natural ability to meet people; never meet a stranger

Otters love to be part of a group; while Retrievers tend to shy from large groups, Otters get revved up in front of a group

Otters tend to be compulsive - this can lead to some great times, but it also can lead to trouble, too

7. *Otters Are Very Susceptible to Peer Pressure*

Otters are people-pleasers; they long to belong, fit in, and be liked by others

Otters are very easily swayed by a crowd

*Parents of Otter children need to develop healthy, strong friendships with their children to help them through the difficult teenage years when peer pressure is so strong

* Otters need to learn that pleasing people and being apart of the crowd is not always the most important or even the best thing

Trait Review

1. Otters just want to have fun
2. Otters are great at motivating others to actions
3. Otters avoid the fine print
4. Otters focus on the future
5. Otters avoid confrontation at all costs
6. Otters are tremendous networkers
7. Otters are very susceptible to peer pressure

Otters Find It Easy To Be Easy On People And Problems - They Take Life Easy (Otters don't get ulcers, but they might give them!)

But Remember, Otter Friend, Life And Relationships Very Often Do Need To Be Taken Seriously!

From the Two Sides of Love, by Gary Smalley & John Trent, Ph.D.

Discovering the Strengths of a Golden Retriever

Of all our animal friends, the Golden Retriever is the one with a sign on their head that says, "I like you. I'll be a great friend."

Seven General Traits of a Golden Retriever

1. *Above All, Golden Retrievers Are Loyal*

Retrievers are loyal. Because of their great loyalty, Retrievers can absorb tremendous emotional pain and still stay committed to the one hurting them

Retrievers can sit for hours listening to the problems of one they are committed to - even to people they don't even know! (Something about a Retriever says, "Call me. I'll listen to your problems for hours.")

+Retrievers are loyal to companies, churches, and organizations

- People can take advantage of Retrievers' loyalty

2. *Golden Retrievers Have A Strong Need For Close Relationships*

Both Otters and Retrievers have a strong desire for relationships. The difference is in the depth of the relationships. Otters may have five "best friends" - a best friend at work, a best friend at school, and so on, but they only know these friends about an inch deep. Retrievers won't know as many people, but they will know them very well

Retrievers especially want intimacy in marriage so being married to a Lion (busy with projects or just busyness), a Beaver (emotionally reserved), or an Otter (outgoing personality, surfacy) can be very frustrating for a Retriever

Retrievers have friendships for life - they still remember their friends in elementary school!

3. *Golden Retrievers Have A Deep Need To Please Others*

Retrievers aren't people-pleasers in the same way as Otters. They have a genuine desire for others' best interests

Retrievers will set aside their own needs to serve others

+ Homes and organizations benefit from the concern of Retrievers

4. *Golden Retrievers Have Hearts Full Of Compassion*

Retrievers will give you the shirt off their backs

Retrievers are very sensitive to how others are feeling and can spot hurting people when Otters and Lions won't see anything wrong

A Retriever's sensitive heart that feels the hurts of others is very easily hurt by others

* If you have a Retriever child, don't let them take the full weight of the family's problems on their shoulders - they will if you let them

* If you have a Retriever person in your life, remember that words which barely scratch a Lion can rip a Retriever apart

From Two Sides of Love, by Gary Smalley & John Trent, Ph.D.

5. *Golden Retrievers Define The Word* Adaptable

Retrievers will rearrange their entire lives - schedules, emotional needs, wants, etc. - for others

+Retrievers' adaptability helps keep harmony in the home, workplace, and relationships, but

- Retrievers have a potential for *codependency* - a situations in which the Retriever enables a person to live an healthy lifestyle (i.e. a woman who "protects" her alcoholic husband by lying to his boss about why he missed work)

- Retrievers can become victims of abuse if their adaptability is out of balance

6. *Golden Retrievers Often React To Sudden Changes*

Prepare a Retriever for change! Lions and Otters thrive on change but Retrievers don't like sudden change. Sometimes if Lion and Otters push too much change on their Retriever spouses and friends, they are met by a teeth-baring snarl!

Retrievers feel used when they have to go along (loyalty) with something they had no part in discussing

* Give Retrievers enough time to adjust to decisions involving change
* Let Retrievers be part of the decision-making process
- Retrievers can be "walked all over" if they are not careful

7. *Golden Retrievers Hold Stubbornly To What They Feel Is Right*

Retrievers are soft and adaptable, but they aren't wimps!

Retrievers will hold tenaciously to something they believe is right; sometimes they'll give their lives, job, money, and friends up for their convictions

Retrievers will follow a leader they respect to the ends of the earth; but push them and they won't budge an inch!

Trait Review

1. Golden retrievers are loyal
2. Golden retrievers have a strong need for close relationships
3. Golden retrievers have a deep need to please others
4. Golden Retrievers have hearts full of compassion
5. Golden retrievers define the word *adaptable*
6. Golden retrievers often react to sudden changes
7. Golden retrievers hold stubbornly to what they feel is right

Retrievers Are Great To Have As Friends, But Retriever Friend, Don't Expect Everyone To Be Able To Meet Your Need For Deep Levels Of Relationship. And Don't Let Your Natural Desire To Please And To Care For Others Place You In Unhealthy Relationships.

From Two Sides of Love, by Gary Smalley & John Trent, Ph.D.

Animal Trait Review

Lion Characteristics

1. Lions are Born Leaders
2. Lions like to accomplish thing with immediate results
3. Lions' time frame is now!
4. Lions are decisive
5. Lions want "To the Point" communication
6. Lions often feel threatened by questions
7. Lions are not afraid of pressure or confrontation

Beaver Characteristics

1. Beavers keep a close watch on their emotions
2. Beavers actually read instruction books
3. Beavers like to make careful decisions
4. Beavers like using their critical skills to solve problems
5. Beavers live by the motto "Let's do it right!"
6. Beavers often turn anger inward
7. Beavers tend to focus on the past

Otter Characteristics

1. Otters just want to have fun!
2. Otters are great at motivating others to actions
3. Otters avoid the fine print
4. Otters focus on the future
5. Otters avoid confrontation at all coasts
6. Otters are tremendous networkers
7. Otters are very susceptible to peer pressure

Golden Retriever Characteristics

1. Golden Retrievers are loyal
2. Golden Retrievers have a strong need for close relationships
3. Golden Retrievers have a deep need to please others
4. Golden Retrievers have hearts full of compassion
5. Golden Retrievers define the word *adaptable*
6. Golden Retrievers often react to sudden changes
7. Golden Retrievers hold stubbornly to what they feel is right

from *The Two Sides of Love* by Gary Smalley & John Trent

SECTION 2

Listening

Listening

There's a joke about an old married couple. The old man accused his wife of "not listenin' anymore, Old Woman. You don't hear!" To prove his point, the man had his wife stand across the room with her back toward him. "Now, I'm gonna holler. And when you hear me, you let me know." Three times he yelled at his wife, "Do you hear me?!" No response. Finally, as he yelled right by her ear, she whipped around and shouted, "I done told you three times, 'Yes!!'"

Who had the hearing problem?

Hearing and listening are different processes. Hearing is a physical function; listening is a mental one. In the second module of our Communication class, we spend time discussing listening. Listening is a skill and, as such, it can be learned and improved. Some personality types like Golden Retrievers are natural listeners, but all of us can improve in this ability.

Our listening booklet is gleaned from several sources. In it we first discuss the importance of listening at wok and everyday life. We see that many interpersonal conflicts arise from poor listening. How many times have we made mistakes or gotten in misunderstandings because we didn't listen?

To introduce this discussion, we review a communication model to show the cyclical process of communicating. Next we take a listening skills survey to determine how well we may listen. And we discuss seven things we can do to listen more effectively. These skills include sitting or standing in the right place, eye contact and questioning the speaker. The material is not earth-shattering; it's all rather common sensical. It is, however, beneficial in that by discussing our listening styles the class becomes aware of the responsibility and roll *we* play in listening to others. The class learns that listening is not a passive but rather active part of relating to others.

Outline

*Communication Model
*Importance of listening in life
*Listening Survey
*Listening Tips
- concentrate on the message rather the speaker
- daydream selectively
- take notes
- ask questions
- sit in the right place
- paraphrasing/using "I" messages
- being sensitive to others' body language

Sources

Communicating in the Workplace, Module 1 of Applied Communication
Agency for Instructional Technology
AIT, Box A, Bloomington, IN 47402
- Describes the communication process, its components and barriers

Listening in the Workplace, Module 1 of Applied Communication
Agency for Instructional Technology
AIT, Box A, Bloomington, IN 47402
- Discusses the importance of listening at work. Contains listening surveys and tips for better listening

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LISTENING SKILLS REVIEW

Put a check in front of the examples of good listening techniques. You are listening to a co-worker named Robert.

_____ 1. Wow! Look at Robert's new hunting jacket. Try to figure out how much it cost instead of what Robert is saying.

_____ 2. Think about what you're going to say as soon as Robert gets quiet.

_____ 3. Look at Robert's face while he is speaking to you.

_____ 4. Keep asking Robert questions in the middle of his sentences.

_____ 5. Fake listening to Robert; it's better than upsetting him by acting bored.

_____ 6. Respond with phrases like, "You don't understand the situation, Robert."

_____ 7. Just assume you understand what Robert is saying. After all, you don't won't to look like you didn't understand him.

_____ 8. After Robert has finished explaining an idea, ask him questions.

_____ 9. Use your time efficiently. Plan your fishing trip while Robert is speaking.

____ 10. Frankly, you don't really like Robert, but you genuinely listen to what he says anyway.

____ 11. When Robert says he needs to talk to you about something very important, tell him that you can listen while you work.

____ 12. Robert has *no* idea what he's talking about, and you know it.

____ 13. When Robert is explaining a new procedure at a meeting, sit towards the back so you can take a nap.

____ 14. When you're explaining your point of view on a topic, you notice Robert is crossing his arms and setting his jaw.

____ 15. When Robert gives you a bunch of things to do, write them down.

Try rephrasing the following statement into an *I Message*:

"Your new way of doing things is stupid - it's never going to work!"

_____

_____

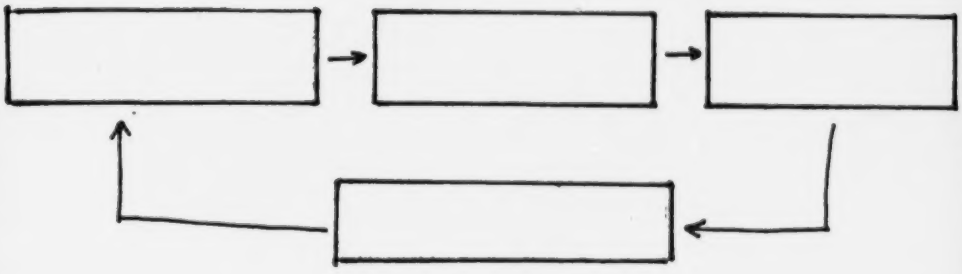
_____

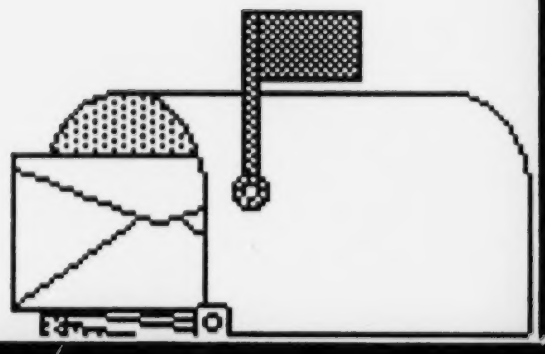
BEING ALL EARS:
Listening at the Workplace

Intro, Self-Evaluation, and Listening Skills

Communication Model

(a picture of how it works)





Lesson 3
Listening in the Workplace

Introduction

Do you know that you spend more time listening than you do speaking, reading, or writing? Interestingly, most people can only remember about half of what they hear just seconds after hearing it! However, improving your listening skills is not difficult if you recognize the barriers and learn to minimize or eliminate them.

In the four parts of this lesson you will

- recognize the difference between simply **hearing** something and actually **listening** to it, and you will evaluate your own listening habits (**Introduction**)
- play the role of an employee listening to a company announcement (**Example**)
- provide listening cues to improve a company announcement (**Application**)
- describe a communication problem caused by poor listening (**Follow-up**)

What's the difference between hearing and listening? Can you hear without listening? Can you listen without hearing? Contrary to what most people believe, hearing and listening are not the same thing. **Hearing** is receiving sound; **listening** is understanding the meaning of that sound. Certainly you can hear without listening. How many times have you heard a child (or yourself!) answer a parent with the comment "I heard you!" but be unable to repeat what the parent meant.

Use the following checklist (or a copy of it) to help you identify your own listening habits.

Listening

One of the most important parts of communication is listening. Poor listening habits are usually the cause of communication problems. Rate your listening habits on the scale below by circling one of the numbers (1-5) after each item.

	USUALLY	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NOT USUALLY	HARDLY EVER
1. After only a short period of listening, I start thinking about what I'm going to say next.	1	2	3	4	5
2. If I don't like the person, I don't really listen to what she/he is saying.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I interrupt others before they are finished talking.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I fake attention.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I talk mostly about myself.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I ask questions.	5	4	3	2	1
7. I give other people a chance to talk.	5	4	3	2	1
8. I try to see things from the other person's point of view.	5	4	3	2	1
9. I maintain good eye contact when listening.	5	4	3	2	1
10. I get so busy taking notes, that I miss some of what is said.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I get distracted easily.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I let my mind wander or I daydream when someone is talking.	1	2	3	4	5

ADD THE CIRCLED NUMBERS TO GET YOUR SCORE:_____

45-60 You are a good listener, and probably make few mistakes at work. More than likely, people enjoy talking to you and being with you.

31-44 You need to improve your listening skills. This will also improve your job performance.

12-30 You are a poor listener. You have probably lost some friends or made mistakes at work because of your poor listening habits.

Communication Skills Inventory

	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Unsure
1. I use natural facial expressions and gestures to convey ideas and feelings.					
2. I am aware of the barriers that affect communication (deadlines and interferences).					
3. I try to reduce factors that negatively affect communication (prejudices, environmental noise, message errors.					
4. I am able to switch easily from sender to receiver when I communicate.					
5. I am able to select the best mode (speaking, writing, visual or nonverbal signals) for communicating.					
6. I use standard patterns of organization (chronological order, spatial order, priority order, comparison and contrast, cause and effect) to present information orally or in writing.					
7. I listen with a purpose so I can concentrate on the message.					
8. I adjust my spoken or written message to the needs of the people listening to or reading the message.					
9. I use reading techniques like scanning, skimming, and summarizing to assist me in my work.					
10. I write with attention to conventions—accurate content, grammatical and mechanical correctness, and proper layout and design.					

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Listening Checklist

Put a check in the column that most accurately describes your usual listening habits.

When I listen, I...	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
1. concentrate on the speaker rather than the message				
2. listen with a purpose				
3. daydream				
4. notice and interpret nonverbal signals				
5. take notes				
6. ask questions before the speaker is finished				
7. anticipate what's coming next				
8. sit at the back of the room				

Listening Habits

Some listening habits are definitely strengths and others may be considered weaknesses, but some can be both, depending on the situation.

Here are some tips for improving your listening habits.

- **Concentrate on the message rather than the speaker.** Colorful personalities draw listener attention, which is good. But their unusual presentation style (clothes, gestures, voice) may eventually distract listeners, to the extent that the message may not be communicated.
- **Daydream selectively.** Normal people spend a surprising percentage of their everyday lives daydreaming. It's acceptable to daydream if you're able to recognize when you are doing it and know how to stop when you need to.
- **Take notes.** Notes help you remember and are useful records of what you listened to. However, if you try to write down too much of what is said (beyond important words and phrases), you'll spend more time writing than listening and thinking.
- **Ask questions.** Most speakers (senders) appreciate questions because they show the receiver's interest. But questions asked

in mid-message can interrupt the sender's flow of ideas. Ask questions only when the sender indicates a willingness to answer them.

- **Sit in the right place.** Sometimes you can't control where you are in relation to the sender; often you must sit or stand where ever a space is available or assigned. If you can choose, pick a location that helps you listen. For example, if you're easily distracted, sit or stand close to the sender. But if you need to view other receivers' reactions, sit or stand far enough away and positioned so that you can see both the sender and the other receivers.

Additional Techniques for Effective Listening

- **Listen with a purpose or interest.** Know why you're listening and what you're listening for.
- **Identify listening cues.** The following are words or phrases that tell you what to expect.

  introduction—let me begin
  main idea—one main point , a central idea
  examples—for instance, for example, like, such as
  details—specifically, an important part of
  conclusion—in summary, finally

- **Recognize common patterns of organizing information.**

  chronological order—first, next, then
  order of importance—most important, least significant, priority
  comparison and contrast—similar, like; different, in contrast
  cause and effect—because, so, therefore

- **Notice nonverbal signals.** Try to determine what they mean.
- **Think about the message.** Take notes if you need to.
- **Be open to new ideas.** Consider other ideas even when you don't agree with them.
- **Know your own listening habits.** Learn to make them work for you and improve them when necessary.

Paraphrasing

One way to improve communication is by *paraphrasing*. Paraphrasing means repeating what a person has said to you, but using slightly different words. This helps you to know whether you understood the message as it was intended.

Paraphrasing might begin something like this:

"If I understand you correctly....."

"I hear you saying.....Is that correct?"

Show how paraphrasing can work in the following conversations. The first one is done for you.

A.

We ran out of sale items this week. I'd like you to take care of that.

Are you saying that I should order more sales items for next week?

B.

I want to go to the game next Saturday, but I'm afraid to ask for the day off.

You sound like you feel anxious about

_____

_____

C.

The new policy on cashing paychecks is really unfair.

Using "I" Messages

Using "I" messages is a skill that can be used when giving criticism, explaining a problem, making a suggestion, or expressing an opinion. The most important thing about "I" messages is that they don't make the other person feel offended by what you say. It doesn't blame "YOU"—the other person.

There are two parts to the "I" message. THE *FIRST PART* OF THE "I" MESSAGE describes your feelings *without blaming* anyone else for the way you feel:

"YOU" Message (blames others)	**"I" Message (first part)**
1. You really make me mad.	1. I'm feeling upset about this.
2. You sure are disorganized.	2. I like to have things well organized.
3. You're always interrupting.	3. Maybe I'm talking too much.
4. You don't understand.	4. _____
5. You're walking too fast.	5. _____
6. You're confusing me.	6. _____
7. Your smoking bothers me.	7. _____

Are you getting the idea? The first part of the "I" message describes your feelings. THE *SECOND PART* OF THE "I" MESSAGE describes how you would like to feel or how you would like the situation to be changed.

"I" Message—first part (describes your feelings)	**"I" Message—2nd part** (describes how you'd like things to change)
1. I'm having some difficulty following you	1. Could we go back to the first part of your story?
2. Although I don't agree, I hear your point of view.	2. I'd like us to understand each other better.
3. I'm concerned about the image of our department.	3. I'm asking everyone to give special attention to personal appearance.

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SECTION 3

Conflict Resolution

Conflict Resolution

Of all the problems we face on a consistent basis, problems with people are the hardest to address and solve. Most of us tend to "internalize" our feelings and in doing so, think we're "avoiding" conflict. However, what we're usually doing is hiding conflict, like trying to paint over mold. It works for only so long. Or perhaps we do address problems but focus on issues which only are symptomatic - not the root of the conflict. Again, this method simply postpones another conflict.

In our Conflict Resolution module we discuss several aspects. First, we introduce conflict as a natural part of any healthy relationship: when people say that after 40 years of marriage they've never had a cross word, well, they lie about other things, too. (Either that or one of them has been dead in the relationship.) Conflict is natural though certainly unpleasant. There are, however, some benefits of conflict. In our class we discuss several of these. For example, one of the greatest benefits of conflict resolution is that it brings to light what the involved parties are really thinking.

The module also covers ways to avoid conflict. And in order to learn how we presently handle conflict, the class takes a conflict-handling survey: Do we force or avoid? Collaborate or accommodate? Finally, the module ends with a five-step process to solve interpersonal conflict.

This Conflict Resolution module of communication class is perhaps the most demanding and needed. If we can learn to face interpersonal conflict and address it correctly, our relationships and life will be greatly enhanced.

Outline

*Sources of Interpersonal Conflict in the Workplace
- personality
- work style

*Conflict Survey

*Preventing Interpersonal Conflict
- understand why there might be conflict
- show that you respect the rights and feelings of coworkers
- assert yourself and show that your rights and feelings should be respected

*What Can Happen in Conflict
- expose the real problem
- uncover alternatives
- interact and involve ourselves

*Conflict Resolution Style Survey
- avoidance
- accommodating
- forcing
- compromise
- collaboration

*Solving Interpersonal Conflict
- identify the problem
- identify possible solutions
- select a solution
- test the solution
- stick to the agreement

Sources

Communicating to Solve Interpersonal Conflict, Module 12 of Applied Communication
Agency for Instructional Technology
AIT, Box A, Bloomington, IN 47402

WUST - Managing Conflict

Name: _____
Date: _____

RESOLVING CONFLICT REVIEW

1. Two major sources of conflict in the workplace are:

   1. _____

   2. _____

2. Number the five (5) steps in the Systematic Problem-Solving Process in their proper order. Write the numbers 1 - 5.

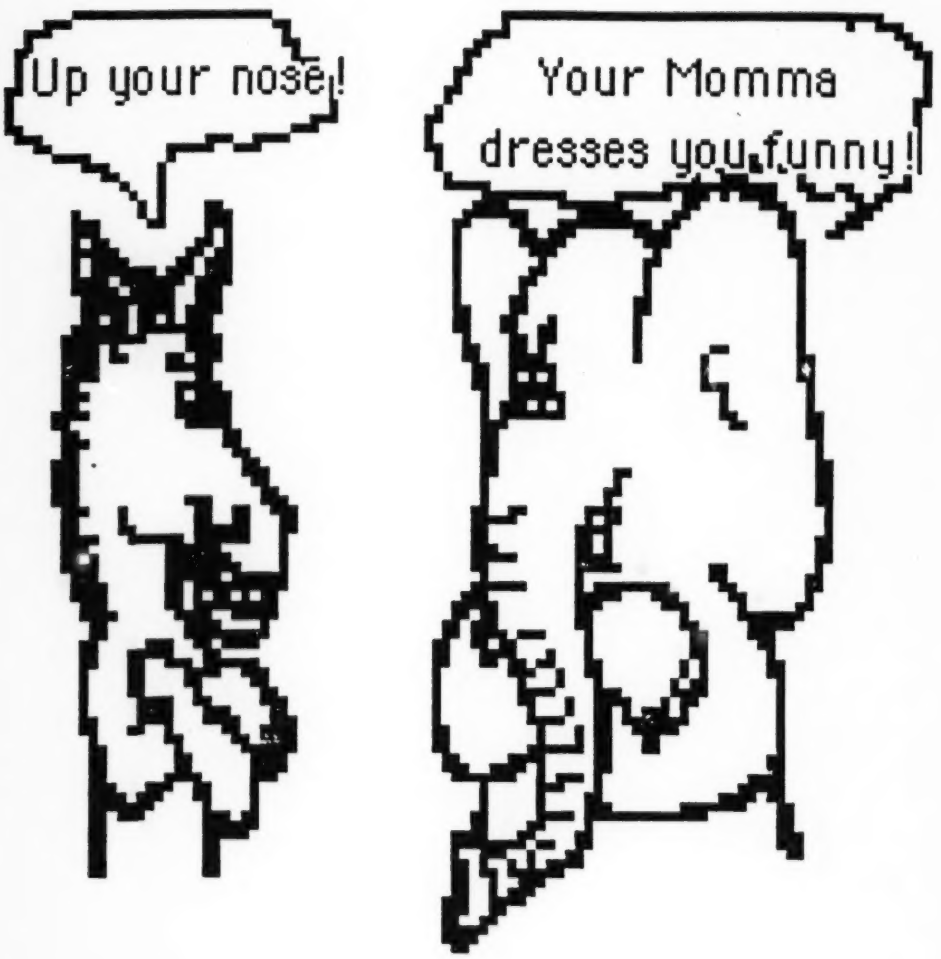
   _____ Select a solution
   _____ Act on the solution
   _____ Investigate the problem
   _____ Test and evaluate the solution
   _____ Identify possible solutions

3. Match the following types of bosses with the appropriate personality and work-style characteristics. Each answer is used only once.

_____ 1. Mixed-Up Boss	A. gives orders in a loud voice and sounds rough
_____ 2. The Barker	B. gets upset and confused
_____ 3. The Double Boss	C. doesn't say much, whether good and bad
_____ 4. Complainer Boss	D. there's more than one boss you answer to
_____ 5. Quiet Boss	E. seldom happy with what employees do
_____ 6. Nice Boss	F. helps you learn the right way to do things

4. Match the best responses to give the appropriate type of boss. Each answer is used only once.

_____ 1. Mixed-Up Boss	A. do what you're told and don't bark back
_____ 2. The Barker	B. ask them if you're doing a good job
_____ 3. The Double Boss	C. ask the boss which of 2 different orders you should do
_____ 4. Complainer Boss	D. thank God for them and work your best!
_____ 5. Quiet Boss	E. try not to take the negative comments too personally
_____ 6. Nice Boss	F. if she's busy, ask another experienced worker what you should do



Conflict In The Workplace: An Ugly Thing

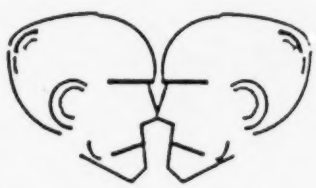
Sources of Conflict, Prevention, Resolving

Lesson 1
Sources of Interpersonal Conflict in the Workplace

Introduction

Our work means a lot to us. It provides us with the economic means to survive and prosper as well as an opportunity for self-fulfillment. Work also gives us the chance to meet and interact with people. Our relations with these people—co-workers, supervisors, clients, and customers—affect our productivity and our personal well-being. When we get along well with others we feel satisfied and are better able to do our job. When we have problems interacting with others we feel frustrated or angry.

Conflict involving two or more people is called interpersonal conflict. **Interpersonal conflict or the inability to get along with others is the number one reason people lose their jobs.** Because conflict can make you less productive and efficient—or even cause you to lose a job—it is important that you learn to solve interpersonal conflict effectively. If you are able to recognize when a conflict occurs, focus on the possible causes, and propose workable solutions, you'll be a more effective employee—and a happier person.



In the four parts of this lesson you will

- read about sources of interpersonal conflict (**Introduction**).
- see a video program that illustrates how differences between two co-workers develop into a conflict (**Example**).
- discuss the causes and effects of the conflict in **Video 12A** (**Application**).
- write a summary describing how you would prevent or resolve the conflict in **Video 12A** (**Follow-up**).

Even though several factors may contribute to a conflict, there are often one or two that are major. Sometimes conflict results from differences in **personality** or **approach to work**. The lists of opposite positions shown on page 2 should give you some idea of the sources of conflict.

Personality

quiet — talkative
internalizes feelings — expresses feelings
timid — outgoing
calm — excitable
caring — cold

Approach to Work

exerts minimum effort — exerts maximum effort
dedicated to personal life — dedicated to company
asks to borrow — takes what is wanted
neat — messy
on-time — late
does what he or she is told to do — does as he or she pleases

Differences on the Job

Imagine that you are a heating and air conditioning technician for the ComfortAire Company. You've just come back from a seminar where you learned about new designs for pressurized hot water systems for homes. You know your company is negotiating to install such systems in a large condominium complex under construction. You have been selected as a group leader for the project. Think about some interpersonal conflicts you might have to deal with as a group leader.

Suppose you have a co-worker who is very quiet and passively accepts directions. He seldom asks questions even when he has a work-related problem, despite the fact that you have repeatedly encouraged him to do so. The two of you may have a **personality conflict.** You believe every employee has something to offer. Your co-worker believes he has nothing to contribute and shouldn't be forced to do so.

If you have two co-workers who are used to a relaxed, friendly relationship with the group leader and you are a "strictly business" type, the three of you may have a conflict involving your **approach to work.** You believe it's unprofessional to mix business and social activities. They believe that a relaxed atmosphere improves productivity. ■

Example

If you have read and understood the sources of interpersonal conflict explained, in the **Introduction** section above, you should be able to

Follow-up

To find out how likely you are to get involved in conflict, or how good you are at preventing it, answer these questions about yourself using the form below and on the following page (or a copy of it). Your answers are for your use only. No one else needs to see them.

How Well Do You Get Along with Others?

Are you an overly critical person who gets annoyed with other people's mistakes and says so?

Yes _____ No _____

Do you frequently challenge other people's ideas or opinions and feel that they don't know as much about the situation as you do?

Yes _____ No _____

Do you often argue when people state their opinions? Do you feel you need to prove that your opinions are right?

Yes _____ No _____

Are people hesitant to discuss things with you because you give the impression that you think other people's opinions are not valuable?

Yes _____ No _____

When you talk about your activities and experiences, do you constantly use the word "I"?

Yes _____ No _____

Think back to your last two or three conversations. Did you do more talking than listening?

Yes _____ No _____

Do you think of yourself as being more capable than your co-workers (or even your supervisors)?

Yes _____ No _____

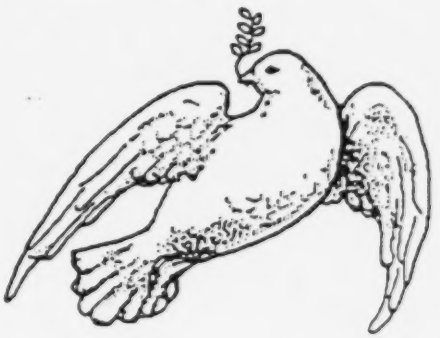
Do you act like a supervisor, even when talking to co-workers?

Yes _____ No _____

If you have three or more "yes" answers, you need to know that others may see you as unpleasant or difficult to work with. However, by giving **as much attention and respect to other people's feelings as you do to your own**, you can reduce the possibility of conflict.

Lesson 2
Preventing Interpersonal Conflict

Introduction



Most conflict in the workplace does not need to happen. Once you realize that a difference between yourself and another worker may lead to a conflict, you can often prevent it. The first step to preventing conflict is to understand the problem. Can you analyze and list the differences between yourself and your co-worker? What are the differences that make your work situation so unpleasant?

In the four parts of this lesson you will

- learn about guidelines that can help you prevent conflict with co-workers (**Introduction**).
- examine a possible conflict in the workplace and the steps taken to prevent it (**Example**).
- suggest ways to prevent differences from leading to conflict (**Application**).
- fill out a self-test to find out whether you are someone likely to become involved in conflict (**Follow-up**).

You and a co-worker may often disagree about the best way to work. Your co-worker may finish every job very quickly but miss many details. You may work slowly and carefully to make sure that each step is correct before you begin the next step. You may work better with a radio playing, but your co-worker might like silence better.

It is always important to keep your work goal in mind. As long as you and your co-workers all want your work to be successful and of high quality, you should be able to work out your differences without conflict.

Guidelines to Prevent Conflict

Differences and disagreements need to be worked out before they cause bad feelings and conflicts, and everyone's work suffers. To do this, workers need to be aware of certain guidelines.

Understand Why There Might Be Conflict -

- Understand **the other person's point of view.** People are not alike. What is the other person's personality like? What is his or her approach to work? Is the other person much older or younger than you? Does his or her age or background cause different feelings about things?

- Understand **your own personality and approach to work.** What about your own age, background, and work experience? How do you approach your work? Can you describe your own personality? Do you feel that you are different from your co-workers?

- Understand **what is important to all of you** who work together. Does your area or department have certain deadlines to meet or quotas to fill? Do you need to meet budget guidelines or quality control standards? Will you all be better off if you work as a team to do what is expected of you?

- **Be observant and listen to others.** Keep your eyes and ears open, so that your mind will be open to better understand their feelings and attitudes. Do older workers spend a lot of time talking about the "good old days"? Maybe they want to keep things the way they were. They may be afraid of change and new ideas.

Does a co-worker talk a lot about "allergies" and "sinuses"? Maybe she's hinting that smoking bothers her.

Show That You Respect the Rights and Feelings of Co-Workers

- **Give credit and thanks** to co-workers whenever you can. They will be more likely to listen to criticism or complaints if you also praise them sometimes. Make sure your praise is sincere. Can you admire the neat and careful work of an older worker? Can you praise someone else's quickness? Can you listen and then say "thanks" for advice, even if you don't really need it?

- **Think before you speak.** Don't express irritation and anger the minute you feel it. Choose the right moment and the right words to show your feelings.

- **Try to find out how others will feel about something you do before you do it.** Can you **ask** others whether your radio bothers them before you turn it on? Can you find out how people feel about smoking before you light up? If you work more slowly or quickly than others, could it be because their work is harder? If you come or go at different times, does that affect their work?

Assert Yourself, and Show That Your Rights and Feelings Should Be Respected

- Explain your own point of view calmly, in ways that don't make others angry. State clearly what you want. Show that you understand the difference between **facts** and **feelings**.

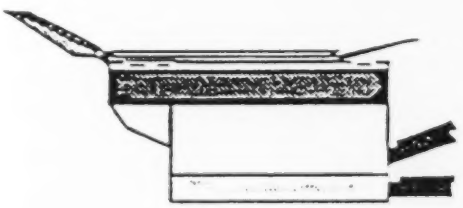
  If your opinion is backed with **facts**, which are clear to everyone, simply show your facts and give others time to change their opinions. If you are really talking about your **feelings** about something, remember that your feelings are never any more right or wrong than the other person's. If others don't agree with you, that is their right. Remember that you don't agree with them all the time either.

- If you need to criticize or complain about something, **avoid getting personal**. Just talk about the job. If a work group has to wait for a co-worker who always finishes 15 minutes after everyone else, don't call him lazy or stupid. Ask what the problem is. Maybe his equipment is not working well. Maybe he needs help with one part of the job. Assume that he would like to do better if he could.

- Be willing to **give in or compromise**. As you discuss differences or problems with others, decide together what is most important and what is least important. At the end, repeat your understanding of the other person's position and your own to make certain no misunderstandings remain.

  For an example, read the following.

  Two workers in an office need to do a lot of photocopying at the end of the morning. Whoever gets to the machine first can leave for lunch on time. The other would end up working through part of the lunch hour.



  When they discuss the problem, they will see that they both need to get the work done and they both have a right to leave for lunch on time. They can compromise by agreeing to take turns being first on the copying machine. They might also consider getting permission for one of them to take a later lunch hour. Each has to give up something. ■

Sources of Possible Conflict between Another Person and Me: Our Differences

Me (personality and approach to work)	Other Person (personality and approach to work)

How can I show respect for the other person?

- What credit or thanks can I give him or her?
- What can I ask to find out how he or she feels?

How can I assert my point of view to the other person?

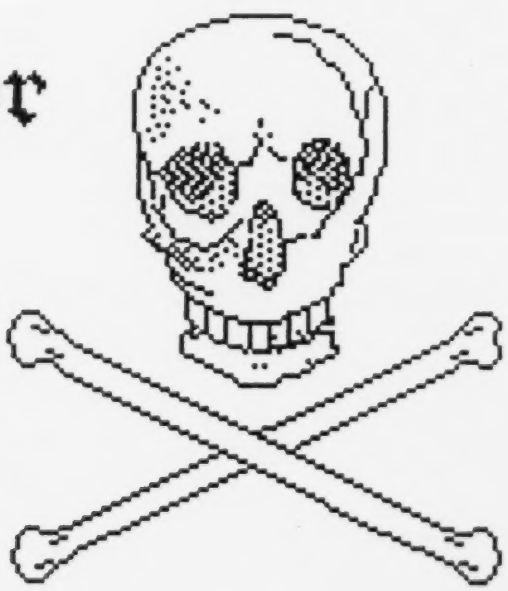
- What facts can I state?
- What feelings can I try to explain?
- What can I say about his or her approach to work that doesn't sound personal?

If we discussed our differences, what would be the result?

- What is most important to each of us?
- What would each of us have to give up to reach a workable compromise?

What Can Happen in Conflict and How Do I Handle It?

or



Why Conflict Occurs:

_____ vs. _____

Outcomes of Conflict:

▶ _____ / _____

If I can't get my way, the other person won't get their way either.

▶ _____ / _____

In this situation, I go into the discussion with my mind made up. I am not prepared to negotiate or collaborate. I'm not really interested in the needs of the other person. If the end result is bad for the other person, fine. If they happen to get a good result, that's fine too, but it really doesn't matter to me.

▶ _____ / _____

I hate conflicts. I'll give in without even clearly expressing my position because it's more important to me to avoid a conflict than it is to get what I need, and I value my relationship with the other person.

▶ _____ / _____

I want to completely understand the other person's position and I want them to completely understand mine. I feel sure that we will be able to find common ground and, with good collaboration, will have a good chance of finding an answer that will be very positive for both of us.

How Can Conflict Be Healthy?

"Conflict ain't all bad"

Conflict can ***Expose the Real Problem***

Too often we think of all conflict as being inherently bad. This isn't so. One good thing that may result from conflict is that the real issue is exposed. Most of the time, the thing we think is causing conflict is not the true culprit. Like the tip of an iceberg, the "problem" is only a visible symptom of something much deeper. The process of resolving conflict can result in exposing the real problem of "what's going on here?"

Conflict can ***Uncover Alternatives***

Do you have the tendency to see and do things a set way? Another good result of conflict is that it may show us there are different ways of doing something. In resolving conflict, we are made to listen to at least one other person's point of view. Often their viewpoint is different from ours (that's why we are in conflict). If we are open to new ides, and are willing to learn and change, seeing how others view a problem and learning how they think things should be done can help us discover alternate solutions to problems. It may even change the way we think about life!

Conflict can get us to ***Interact and Involve Ourselves***

It is sad but true that for some relationships, it takes a problem to bring people together. A third positive result of conflict is that in its resolution, people are forced to at least *speak* to one another. They are forced to become involved in each others' lives. How many times have we heard of a separated husband and wife or a fighting father and son reconciling during some time of trouble? Conflict can result in the renewed or revitalized relationship between the conflicting parties.

Conflict Behavior Exercise

Everyone behaves differently in a conflict. Most of use never really consider how we will act in a conflict situation, we normally just do whatever comes most naturally.

Listed below are several statements that describe how people sometimes behave in a conflict situation. Reach each statement carefully. Using the scale below, rate how typical each statement is of how <u>you</u> usually behave in a conflict situation or what you believe about conflicts.

1	2	3	4	5
I almost never act this way in conflict.	I seldom act this way in a conflict.	I occasionally act this way in a conflict.	I often act this way in conflict.	I almost always act this way in a conflict.

Rating	Statement
____	1. Speaking nicely to someone will melt a cold heart.
____	2. Not getting into a quarrel is easier than getting out of one.
____	3. You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours.
____	4. Working things out together is best.
____	5. If people don't want to think like you do, make them do it anyway.
____	6. Smooth is best–in what you say, and what you do.
____	7. In a quarrel, keeping silent is the best policy.

1	2	3	4	5
I almost never act this way in conflict.	I seldom act this way in a conflict.	I occasionally act this way in a conflict.	I often act this way in conflict.	I almost always act this way in a conflict.

Rating	Statement
_____	8. A piece of pie beats no pie at all.
_____	9. Major opinions are not necessarily the truth.
_____	10. Being stronger is better than being right.
_____	11. You catch more files with honey than with vinegar.
_____	12. Throw down your weapon and run away; live to fight another day.
_____	13. A fair trade never results in a disagreement.
_____	14. None of us is as smart as all of us.
_____	15. It is better to win by a large margin than to barely lose.
_____	16. A kind word makes all the difference.
_____	17. If someone doesn't think the say we do, don't have anything to do with the:
_____	18. I will gladly pay you Tuesday for a hamburger today.

1	2	3	4	5
I almost never act this way in conflict.	I seldom act this way in a conflict.	I occasionally act this way in a conflict.	I often act this way in conflict.	I almost always act this way in a conflict.

Rating	Statement
____	19. Come let us reason together.
____	20. Nice guys finish last.
____	21. It is better to give than to receive.
____	22. Let sleeping dogs lie.
____	23. You've got to give a little to get a little.
____	24. Facing your conflicts openly brings out the best solution.
____	25. Be reasonable—do it my way.
____	26. "A loaf of bred, a cup of wine, and thee." (charm them into peaee)
____	27. The long route with no obstacles is better than a short route with a few obstacles.
____	28. Meeting half way always works best.
____	29. Truth and honesty work best.
____	30. No one remembers who comes in second place.

Strategies: What They Mean

Strategy	What Happens When Used:	Appropriate to Use When:	Inappropriate to Use When:
	Person tries to solve problem by denying its existence. Results in lose/lose.	Issue is relatively unimportant; timing is wrong; cooling off period is needed; short-term use.	Issue is important; when issue will not disappear, but build.
	Differences are played down; surface harmony exists. Results in lose/win in forms of resentment, defensiveness, and possible sabotage if issue remains suppressed.	Same as above, also when preservation of relationship is more important at the moment.	Reluctance to deal with conflict leads to evasion of an important issue; when others are ready and willing to deal with issue.
	One's authority, position, majority rule, or a persuasive minority settles the conflict. Results in win/lose if the dominated party sees no hope for self.	When power comes with position of authority; when this method has been agreed upon.	Losers have no way to express needs; could result in future disruptions.
	Each party gives up something in order to meet midway. Results in "middle of the road" position and ignores the real diversity of the issue.	Both parties have enough leeway to give; resources are limited.	Original inflated position is unrealistic; solution is watered down to be effective; commitment is doubled by parties involved.
	Abilities, values, and expertise of all are recognized; each person's position is clear, but emphasis is on group solution. Results in win/win for all.	Time is available to complete the process; parties are committed and trained in use of process.	The conditions of time, abilities, and commitment are not present.

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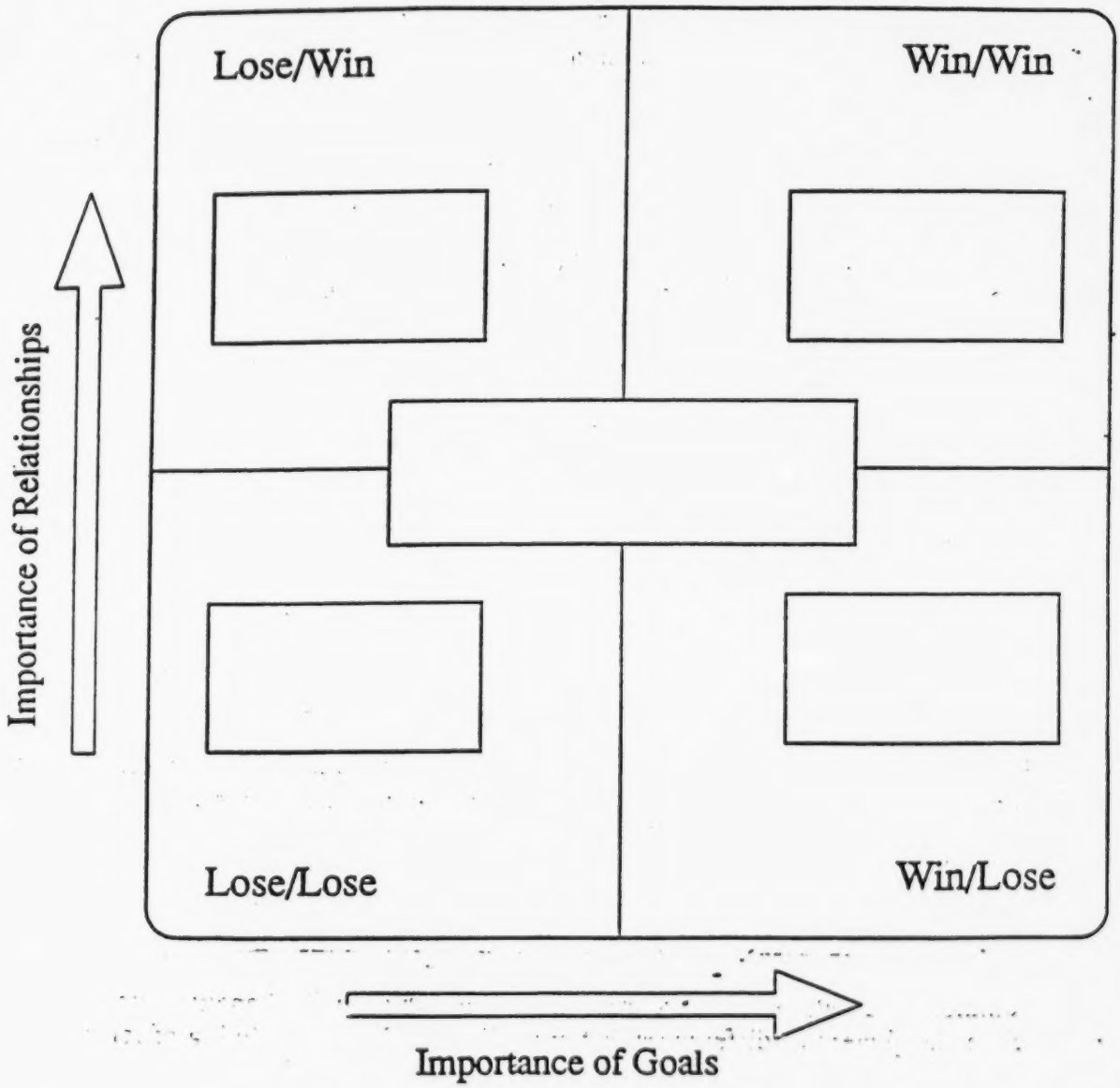
Needs, Outcomes, and Strategies

The Model Revisited



CONFLICT RESOLUTION FORMAT

1. _____ _____

Greeting, socializing to reduce tension.

2. _____ _____

Acknowledge that conflict exists. State your intentions for the meeting: to hear and understand the other person's point of view, to openly state your point of view, and come to a resolution that is a "win/win".

3. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Active listening; questions; summaries; paraphrasing, etc.

4. _____ _____ _____ _____

Background of concern, an example, what you've done so far to try to address it, and summary of the impact (stated in terms designed to avoid a defensive reaction).

5. _____ _____ _____ _____

Common ground, steps that can be taken which will benefit both parties, acknowledgement of differences that are still unresolved, scheduling of follow up.

"In the future, you will _____ and I will _____."

Future process check: "We'll discuss this again on _____."

Lesson 3
Solving Interpersonal Conflict in the Workplace

Introduction

All conflicts have a solution, but the best solutions are those in which everyone wins. In such a **win-win** situation, both people have their wants and needs recognized and at least partly met. Often such a solution involves a compromise. Each person gets something, but each has to give up something, too.

In the four parts of this lesson you will

- learn a practical way to resolve conflict (**Introduction**).
- examine and analyze a specific workplace conflict that must be resolved (**Example**).
- use your analysis of the conflict to propose possible solutions to it (**Application**).
- analyze and solve a conflict that you have observed or experienced in your own work (**Follow-up**).

To resolve conflict in the best way possible, so that no one is really a loser, use a three-step problem-solving approach, similar to the problem-solving approach you learned in **Using Problem-Solving Strategies (Module 3)**. This approach involves **investigating the conflict, working out a solution**, and **acting and following through.**

Resolving Conflict between People

Investigate the Conflict

- **Identify** the conflict. Lay out the facts. Who is involved? What differences in personality and approach toward work are involved? What situations are causing conflict?
- Look for **reasons and causes** behind the differences and situations that lead to conflict. Try to look beyond a single incident and find patterns. What is it about the way the other person

speaks or behaves that causes conflict with you? Why does the other person speak or behave this way? You may have to ask co-workers for information or background to get at some of the reasons for another person's behavior or actions.

- **Discuss** the conflict with someone who is not involved. A third person who is fair, doesn't take sides, and knows how to listen can often help you to sort out the facts about a conflict.

Work Out a Solution

- **Talk** about the problem with the other person. Arrange to talk about the problem at a time that is convenient for both of you. **Say why you want to talk about the conflict.** Tell what you think the conflict is about—how you've identified it. Ask for information or background that would help you understand the other person better. **Explain why the conflict worries you.** Tell how it affects you and your work. As calmly as possible, say what you think has caused the conflict. **Be careful not to blame** the other person. Stick to the facts.

- **Let each of you explain your point of view** and why you took action the way you did. Say what you want changed or improved, and **listen** when the other person does the same. Restate the other person's needs to show you understand them. Suppose, for instance, cigarette smoke really bothers you, but your co-worker at the next desk smokes a lot and says she works better when she is smoking.

Don't say: "You've got to stop smoking. It's making me sick and I can't work. It's not fair for you to make me have to work with a cough and headache all the time. I'm sure I had that cold last week because I've had to breath your smoke."

Do say: "We've got a real difference about smoking. I find that smoke gives me a headache and cough so that I don't work as well as I could, but you work faster and better when you smoke. We'll have to find some way to work this out."

- **Brainstorm** with the other person to name several possible **solutions** without judging them. Ask, "What can I do to help? What can we do to help each other?"

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- **Evaluate** each solution by asking questions.

  Ask, "Will this solution completely clear up the cause of the problem?"

  Ask, "What do we have to do to make this solution work? Will it take more time, more effort, or permission from a supervisor?"

  Ask, "What will happen if we do this? Will others be affected? Will it help them or make problems for them?"

- **Choose** which solution seems to be best. You might decide to try it for a little while to see if it works. If not, you can try another solution.

- If you can't come up with a solution, **get help** from someone else in the workplace who may be able to help you find a solution. Do this **before** the situation reaches a crisis.

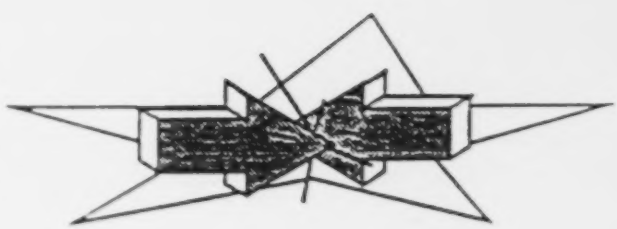
Act and Follow Through

- Stick to your side of the agreement.

- Thank the other person for taking steps to make the solution work. Say, for example, "I know it's hard for you to smoke only in the lounge, but I really appreciate it." Show that you **recognize and appreciate** the effort.

Example

Both Pat Schenley and Jean Collins are first-shift healthcare aides at Maplewood Hospital. For the past two weeks, they've been involved in a number of conflicts with each other. Now it's starting to affect their ability to work together.



Read each of their statements on page 16 to see how the conflict looks to the persons directly involved.

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Systematic Problem-Solving Process

- Investigate the problem
- Identify possible solutions
- Select a solution
- Test and evaluate the solution
- Act on the solution